

## Strathclyde's Confucius Institute wins global award

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The Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools (CISS), based at the University of Strathclyde, was awarded the accolade by Hanban, a public institution affiliated with the Chinese Ministry of Education. There are 475 Confucius Institutes around the world.

CISS provides support to more than 300 schools across Scotland, furthering the teaching of Chinese language and culture.

Angela Constance, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, said: "Winning this international accolade is wonderful news for the Confucius Institute for Scotland's Schools and Scotland as a whole.

"It is a well-deserved acknowledgement of the hard work that goes into supporting thousands of pupils across the country learn the Chinese language. The Institute's work has helped open the eyes of our young people to a fascinating culture and given them a window onto the wider world beyond their classrooms to inspire them to learn."

Professor Sir Jim McDonald, Principal of the University of Strathclyde, said: "More than 20,000 pupils across Scotland are benefiting from Chinese language and cultural learning activities thanks to the Confucius Institute at Strathclyde. We equip these pupils with a global outlook and skills that will support them throughout their careers in business, industry and the professions.

"Our Confucius Institute plays a major role in supporting our vision as a leading international technological university – and in strengthening Scotland's wider links with China – and we are delighted its important work has been formally recognised by Hanban."

Fhiona Fisher, Director of SCILT – Scotland's National Centre for Languages – where CISS is co-located, said: "I'm really delighted that CISS has received this very prestigious award.

"It is testament to the hard work and dedication not only of the team at the University of Strathclyde, but also recognises the excellent work that is being undertaken in our Confucius Classroom hubs across the country."

Launched in June 2012, CISS's aim is to support the delivery of high-quality Chinese language learning to Scotland's children. CISS provides strategic direction to Confucius classroom hubs, supports teachers, promotes the benefits of learning about Chinese language and culture, and works closely with Hanban, Tianjin Education Commission and the Scottish Government.

CISS recently added four more Confucius Classroom Hubs – taking its total in Scotland to 16, covering 21 local authority areas. There are more than 300 schools and 20,000 pupils involved in Chinese language and culture activities.

Paul McLaughlin, Head Teacher of St Ninian's High School in Kirkintilloch, East Dunbartonshire, said: "Our links with CISS have allowed us as a school to build on our already strong curriculum and provide further opportunities for our young people to prepare for life in an ever changing world. The commitment to the learning of Mandarin for all of our pupils from S1, the cultural lessons delivered across the curriculum and the language immersion courses for pupils – all facilitated in part and supported by CISS – have seen our students become more aware of their place in the global setting.

"The work done by the Classroom Hub has taken this further in order to allow young people across the authority to access these opportunities and has had a very positive impact on the young people involved."

Louise Capoulade-Murphy, an S6 pupil at St Ninian's High School, said: "I have really enjoyed learning Mandarin. Initially, I found it quite tricky but with the support offered in school and the opportunity to spend time in China it has become a lot easier.

"I feel that this skill will set me apart from my peers as I move forward. It has also made me realise just how small the world is and now that it has been opened up to me through language my options have grown."

The work of CISS has meant that the promotion of Mandarin is at the heart of the Scottish Government's 1+2 languages policy – a framework for language learning in Scotland based on the mother tongue, plus two additional languages, model recommended by the European Union and adopted in many countries in Europe and beyond.

### Notes to Editors:

The University of Strathclyde is a leading international technological university which is recognised for strong research links with business and industry, commitment to enterprise and skills development, and knowledge sharing with the private and public sectors. The University was named UK University of the Year in the 2012 Times Higher Education (THE) Awards. In the 2013 THE Awards, the University was named Entrepreneurial University of the Year.

**Further information:**

Corporate Communications

University of Strathclyde

T: 0141 548 4373

E: [corporatecomms@strath.ac.uk](mailto:corporatecomms@strath.ac.uk)

**For more information contact:**

Lachlan Mackinnon

Email: [lachlan.mackinnon@strath.ac.uk](mailto:lachlan.mackinnon@strath.ac.uk)